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NOTES
ON SOME OF
THE PRINCIPAL PICTURES
EXHIBITED IN THE ROOMS OF THE
ROYAL ACADEMY,
AND THE
SOCIETY OF PAINTERS IN WATER COLOURS:
No. II.—1856.



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No. II.—1856.

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ARCHITECTURE," ETC., ETC.

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PREFACE.

IN presenting the second number of these "Notes" to the public, distinguished as they are from most of the criticism brought under their notice, by the writer's attaching his name to them, I may perhaps be permitted one or two words respecting the probable difference, in aim, between anonymous and acknowledged criticism; and this the rather, that I found, last year, the offence which the work, in its very nature, could not but give, seemed to be deepened instead of diminished by the fact of its being openly owned to; and I was bitterly accused of malice or unkindness, as if malice were usually the most outspoken passion in the world, and unkindness always the greater when it was ready to answer for itself.

It is evident that there can be but three reasons for a writer's concealment of his personality. Either, firstly, having confidence in what he has written, he must have none in his name (as I wrote the first

volume of "Modern Painters," sure of the truth of what I wrote, but fearing that I might not obtain fair hearing if the reader knew my youth). Or, secondly, he may know that his name would carry some weight with it, but may be ashamed of what he has written. Or, thirdly, there may be dangers of private loss or inconvenience, which he cannot speak openly without incurring, and which to avoid, he must get his opinion uttered as best he may, namelessly. Generally, I believe, the last reason to be the only legitimate one ; and that, though in rare instances it may be wisdom to try to obtain a hearing under a masque, which would be refused if the face were shown, in all ordinary cases it should be not only with the voice, but with the eyes, that men should address their fellows. I never felt at ease in my "graduate" incognito, and although I consented, some nine years ago, to review Lord Lindsay's "Christian Art," and Sir Charles Eastlake's Essay on Oil Painting, in the "Quarterly," I have ever since steadily refused to write even for that once respectable periodical.*

* It has lately, I observe, in consequence, sought to amuse its readers by some account of my private affairs ; of which—if the writer of the article in question is not ashamed of *his* name—I shall be happy to furnish him with more accurate details, as well as to recommend him to a school where he may learn what will not in future be disadvantageous to his writings—a little more astronomy and optics.

But, as touching these "Notes," of which I hope to continue the series yearly, I trust that the reader will feel that I have given him the best guarantee in my power of their sincere purpose, in signing them. If he thinks I always see the brightest colours in the works of my friends, or that it can only be in rooted malice that I point out an error in perspective, I have put it in his power to inquire into these matters, and to ascertain for himself whether indeed it is always a friend's work that I praise, or whether the transgressor of perspective law is conscious of any personal enmity between himself and me. And truly, it is a sorrowful thing to me, and one bearing witness, very bitterly, to the dishonesty of criticism in general, that people should be so ready to call every kind of faultfinding "hostility," the moment they can bring it home to a known person. One would think, to hear them, that there was no right or wrong in art; that every opinion which men formed of it was dictated by prejudice, and expressed in passion; that all praise was treacherous—all rebuke malignant—and silence itself merely a pause of hesitation between Flattery and Slander.

That it must sometimes be so, I am forced to believe, since the imputation of such dishonesty is constant; and it is strange, as well as frightful, to

reflect how many forms of guilt are involved in one dishonest criticism. A common thief steals only property—a dishonest critic steals property, together with Fame, and the power of being useful. A common thief steals, for the most part, in imperfect knowledge of right. But a dishonest critic steals wittingly, and with all advantages of education. A common thief steals “to satisfy his soul when he is hungry;” but a dishonest critic, to satisfy his soul when he is envious. A common liar risks the discovery, and bears the penalty, of his own falsehood; but a lying critic shrinks behind his associates, and diffuses the discredit of his falsehood, while he multiplies its influence. A common liar, being discovered, leaves other men’s honour unscathed. A lying critic, discovered, has infected with his own disgrace the men behind whom he stooped, and cast suspicion over the general honour of his race.

This, and much more than this, is the real character of all anonymous writers against conscience; and the evil of it would be too great to be, with a remnant of charity, imputed to any human being, were it not that men continually commit their most blameable acts in the mere dullness of habit, and are like dogs taught to pilfer, in whom we pardon, to the

imperfect nature, what would be unpardonable in a rational one.

It is little to say that I am free from guilt such as this. I have striven, from the first day when I began to write, to reach an impartiality far beyond that of mere uprightness. It is possible to be thoroughly upright, and yet unconsciously partial—continually deceived by personal associations or instincts. I have striven for that higher impartiality, which can only be obtained by labour in conquering predilections, by toil in the successive study of opponent schools, and earnest endeavour to sympathize with the separate spirit of each master I approached. And I can say fearlessly, that although it is not possible, in the time I am able to give to this work, to enter as I should desire into the consideration of every picture examined, yet I approach each of them with a distinct effort to gain the point of aspect by which its painter intended it to be commanded, and with a personal experience of the difficulties of various art, which renders me as charitable to true effort as disdainful of attempts to be great without labour. I say this, once for all, and the reader will perhaps pardon me this length of preface, since it is to assure him that I do not write these notes carelessly, nor look upon them as things of little importance. I look

upon them, on the contrary, as one of the chief works which I have henceforward to do ; and though, from its very nature, it must always be done hastily, it never will be done thoughtlessly, nor without the earnest hope that the pain I may have to give by unwilling blame, may be more than counterbalanced by the help which I know even the best painters may derive from the expression of an eager sympathy, and a faithful praise.

NOTES,

&c., &c.

EXHIBITION OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY.

IF the reader, before fixing his attention on any particular work, will glance generally round any of the rooms, he will be struck by a singular change in the character of the entire exhibition. He will find that he can no longer distinguish the Pre-Raphaelite works as a separate class; but that between them and the comparatively few pictures remaining quite of the old school, there is a perfectly unbroken gradation, formed by the works of painters in various stages of progress, struggling forward out of their conventionalism to the Pre-Raphaelite standard. The meaning of this is simply that the battle is completely and confessedly won by the latter party; that animosity has changed into emulation, astonishment into sympathy, and that a true and consistent school of art is at last established in the Royal Academy of England.

Such an exhibition I have never yet seen, and the excellence of it is all the more to be rejoiced in,

because it is every whit progressive. It does not consist merely in the splendour of the work of one noble artist, urged to unusual exertion (though this it can boast), nor in an accidental assemblage of the happiest efforts of several (though by this also it is adorned); but in the achievement which has rewarded the steady effort of all, now at last turned in the right direction, and ensuring for each, in process of time, such utmost success as his genius is capable of. There is hardly an exhibitor this year who has not surpassed himself, and who will not surpass himself again in every subsequent effort; and I know that they must feel this, and must be as happy in their sense of sudden power, and in the perception of the new world opened to their sincerity, as we spectators have cause to be in the gifts of art they offer us.

As for my own special work, I look upon it as now almost supererogatory—I have little to do but to multiply monotonous terms of praise; for, now that nearly every picture in the room has a meaning, and the observer is thus led to expect one, and to exert his attention, I believe that people will easily distinguish such meanings for themselves, without the impertinence of explanation; and as for minor fault-finding, I hold it generally useless in the cases of artists who mean well, and are painting from Nature. They will gradually find out their faults for themselves, and the spectator ought seldom to have his attention withdrawn from the real merits by any carping at passages of failure. Last year several pictures, in which to point to anything was to point

to an error, were put into the best places, when it was right at once to mark their demerit, in order to check this system of complimentary precedence. But this year, the worst pictures are, for the most part, in retired places, and there I shall have pleasure in leaving them. If I find fault with any others, it is either to help the observer in forming his judgment of art in general, or to suggest a possibly better mode of practice to the painter.

10. Christmas Day in St. Peter's, at Rome, 1854. (D. Roberts, R.A.)

The change above spoken of is very manifest in this, the first picture of importance enough to attract the eye. It is both careful and brilliant; and though I do not myself like the subject (caring neither for the architecture, nor the pomp, of St. Peter's), I can answer for the faithful delineation of what must be to most people a striking scene. The effect of light and shade in this picture was very difficult, and is studiously wrought—note, for instance, the pretty and true change in the colour of the red cross in the dome, where it is half in shade and half in sun.

8. The Roadside Spring, Yorkshire. (E. C. Booth.)

From the pomp of marble and strength of multitude, let us turn back to this quiet nook beside the wild Yorkshire road, and consider a little whether the truer grandeur is in those lifted aisles or in this fragment of grey wall, overwaved by its few ears of

corn, and ringing to the low voice of its lonely brooklet. The picture is not a first-rate one—it is not even a very special example of the advancing school; but the mind of the painter has been in happy tone when he chose his subject, and if you examine it, kneeling (there is no other way), as perhaps you would those flowers and grass by the roadside itself, I think you will have pleasure in watching the delicate tracery of the bush leaves, and the stoop of the poppy over the wall, and the soft moss and grass in its crannies, and the clear water, just making the road a little browner where it spreads over it. I cannot answer for the feelings of others, but I think there is more benediction to be had here than out of the magnificence of St. Peter's.

17 "Love's Labour Lost." (F. R. Pickersgill, A.)

This picture presents the same elements of advance in a yet more curious and striking way. Mr. Pickersgill is already a Pre-Raphaelite in purpose, and only fails, as when artists first begin to work thoroughly from nature they always fail, by painting the easiest things too definitely better than the rest. I do not mean that they ought to paint the easy things worse; but only that a discordance is always felt in this stage of their study between the good accessory parts and failing principal ones. It is to be mended by conquering the difficult, not by surrendering the easy. If we examine the jewellery of the lady dressed in blue, in the centre, or the golden brocade of the one on the left, we shall find them very nearly right: the

grass is also coming fast right; but Mr. Pickersgill cannot yet paint a face. A little more hard work, taking his models just as they come, without any fear or flattery, and he will win his spurs.

35. Home. (J. N. Paton.)

A most pathetic and precious picture, easily understood, and entirely right as far as feeling is concerned. Mr. Paton must have had more pleasure in painting this picture than in those fairy assemblies of his; and though the cottage details here are not so attractive as those nightshade and woodbine convolutions of leaf scenery, they are in reality better painted, and serve to better use. Mr. Paton has, however, a good deal yet to learn in colour. He should for this spring paint nothing but opening flowers, and, in the autumn, nothing but apricots and peaches.

39. The Stream from Llyn Idwal, Carnarvonshire. (A. W. Hunt.)

The best landscape I have seen in the exhibition for many a day—uniting most subtle finish and watchfulness of nature, with real and rare power of composition. The mass of mountain in the centre is grandly arranged, so as best to set off the action of its contour, and contrasted with the diagonal cleavages of rock on the left: note how they run from the foreground up to the crest of the hill. The *rents* of cloud, and fading or forming of the hill shadows through them, are magnificently expressed. It only wants a little more subtlety in the finish of the gra-

dations : portions of those clouds ought to be stippled so delicately that the eye could not trace the outmost touches—this would also give them more depth and unity. Seen a little way off, the work is spotty, at present, and wants bringing together ; the worst part being the dappled blue sky on the left, in which the blue is not pure, nor the clouds soft, nor well set. The sheep in the foreground look too small—not but that real sheep in a Welch foreground often do ; but it is the painter's business to avoid this, and make everything look of its real size.

58. Cinderella, after her Sisters have left for the Ball. (Miss E. Turck.)

Very pretty, and well studied ; but Cinderella does not look like the lady of a fairy tale. I am rather puzzled myself to know how her relationship to her remarkable godmother could best be indicated, so as to leave her still a quite *real* little lady in a real kitchen. But I am glad to see this sternly realistic treatment, at all events.

59. The White Owl. (W. J. Webbe.)

A careful study—the brown wing excellent. The softness of an owl's feathers is perhaps inimitable ; but I think the breast might have come nearer the mark.

68. Little Red Riding Hood. (R. Redgrave, R.A.)

Mr. Redgrave has, as far as I know, never painted so good a landscape. The ferns in the centre are

beautiful; and there is evidence of painstaking and of good feeling everywhere.

75. The Last Parting of Marie Antoinette and her Son. (E. M. Ward, R.A.)

I fear this picture must be excepted from the progressive list, and marked as one of the representations of the old school; but it is not a bad one.

94. The Abandoned. (C. Stanfield, R.A.)

Perhaps this also is rather a fortunate example of the artist's work than a new phase of it. But I never saw a Stanfield I liked so well: the sea is superb—quite Turnerian in the mystery of the farther waves—and the sentiment of the picture very grand; and that not by means of twilight, or sunset, or moonlight, or any strangeness of arrangement or elaboration of idea, but by simple fact of deserted ship and desert sea.

101. The Greetings in the Desert, Egypt—"Selamet" Teiyibeen. (J. F. Lewis.)

The superposition of this picture to "West Australian" is the first glaring piece of bad hanging I note in the Academy this year. Mr. Cooper's picture, whatever its merits may be, is executed so as to have been seen quite as well in the upper place; while Mr. Lewis's cannot be seen in the least but on the line. It would take no trouble, any afternoon when the Academy closes, to change the places; and I am sure that Mr. Cooper would, in enforcing such an

arrangement, be felt to have paid a just tribute to the talents of a great brother artist, and to have done himself little injury, and much honour.

Of the style of Mr. Lewis's picture I need only say that it is like that of his work in general, and refer the reader to the note on the example of it in the rooms of the Water Colour Society. There is, however, a very curious and skilful circumstance in the composition here; the neck of the camel was too serpentine, and stopped too abruptly after suggesting this undulation of line. The white cloud beyond at once varies, and continues, this serpentine tendency, leading it away towards the upper edge of the picture, while the straight flakes of cloud, descending obliquely to the right, oppose the two upright peaks of the saddle.

I may as well refer at once to Mr. Lewis's other work, 336 (the Academy is rich in possessing two). How two such pictures have been executed, together with the drawing for the Water Colour Society, all within the year, is to me wholly inconceivable; there seems a year's work in 336 alone. Yet it is not a favourable example of the master; the toil being too palpable and equal on the stones in the reflected light; where also there is neither colour nor form of interest enough to justify it. The draperies and trelliswork are faultlessly marvellous.

131. "Many Happy Returns of the Day." (W. P. Frith, R.A.)

A taking picture, much, it seems to me, above Mr.

Frith's former standard. Note the advancing Pre-Raphaelitism in the wreath of leaves round the child's head. One is only sorry to see any fair little child having too many and too kind friends, and in so great danger of being toasted, toyed, and wreathed into selfishness and misery.

138. Mr. David Cox. (Sir J. W. Gordon, R.A.)

A very noble portrait, and, in the unassuming but powerful features, thoroughly characteristic. I am heartily glad to see this work of honour to a good painter so well accomplished.

145. Geraniums. (Miss Mutrie.)

146. Roses. (Miss A. F. Mutrie.)

I cannot say more of the work of the two Misses Mutrie than I have said already. It is nearly as good as simple flower-painting can be; the only bettering it is capable of would be by more able composition, or by the selection, for its subject, of flowers growing naturally. Why not a roadside bank of violets? 335 and 342 are the best examples, by these artists, in this exhibition.

147. Saved! (Sir E. Landseer, R.A.)

I wish this picture had not been put so high, for the bolder Landseer is in handling, the more interesting his work becomes, under close observance: nor does his peculiar system of clay-colouring gain at all in effect by distance. I never saw a child fall into water, nor a dog bring one out;

but under such circumstances are not its clothes usually wet? and do not wet clothes cling to the limbs?

155. Her Majesty the Empress Eugenie. (E. Boutibonne.)

This would have been a really admirable portrait but for its foggy and slovenly distance. Complete that, and the work would look almost like life.

160. The Letter. (E. Delfosse.)

A fair example of a peculiar, and very clever, though perhaps I should hardly call it meritorious, style, lately much adopted by French artists. It is a mannerism of softness, and subduing of all very bright colours—more or less successful in result, of course, according to the painter's general powers; but yet seeming to be taught in schools of art so extensive and so popular as to assimilate a large number of painters not only in style, but in aim, and prevent their emerging from a charmed circle of subjects—consisting usually of pretty women, sprightly in expression, but rather blunt in chiselling of features, wearing prettily brocaded dresses, and doing nothing, prettily. These works seem to be gradually constituting a species of manufacture, which supplies the French drawing-rooms with pictures, as Sèvres does with china. Nevertheless, one very original painter belongs to this school, of whom more presently.*

* See Notes on French Exhibition at the close of the pamphlet.

162. The Graces. (W. E. Frost, A.)

I believe Mr. Frost might be a painter if he chose ; but he will not become one by multiplying studies of this kind ; looking like Etty's with all the colour scraped off. Everybody knows well enough, by this time, that Graces always stand on one leg, and bend the other, and never have anything to fasten their dresses with at the waists. Cannot Mr. Frost tell us something new ?

175. The Emperor Charles V. at Yuste. (A. Elmore, A.)

One of the works still belonging wholly to the old school : there is a good deal of fair painting in it, but an extraordinary missing of the main mark throughout. See the second paragraph of the long quotation in the catalogue :—

“ Again the afternoon sun was shining over the great walnut-tree, full into the gallery. From this pleasant spot, filled with the fragrance of the garden and the murmur of the fountain, and bright with glimpses of the golden Vera, they carried him to the gloomy chamber of his sleepless nights, and laid him on the bed from which he was to rise no more.”

Naturally we expect the painter to take some pains (as he has given this quotation) in the expression of verdure, fragrance, and sunshine. But the walnut-tree is grey, not green ; the air, judging by the look of it, cannot be perfumed by anything but paint ; and there is no sunshine anywhere, while the whitish light, which is given for it, shines not over the tree into the gallery, but from the back of the spectator. The exhibited pictures, by Titian (!) are greyer than

all the rest. Charles must have bought them from an exceedingly dishonest dealer.

200. Peace concluded, 1856. (J. E. Millais, A.)

I thought, some time ago, that this painter was likely to be headed by others of the school; but Titian himself could hardly head him now. This picture is as brilliant in invention as consummate in executive power; both this and *Autumn Leaves*, 448, will rank in future among the world's best masterpieces; and I see no limit to what the painter may hope in future to achieve. I am not sure whether he may not be destined to surpass all that has yet been done in figure-painting, as Turner did all past landscape.*

221. The Breakwater at Plymouth. (F. R. Lee, R.A.)

It is long since Mr. Lee painted such a picture as this; nor, as far as I recollect, has any one else yet so faithfully rendered the sweep of large waves over level wall. The sense of space is very great throughout, and there is really fine feeling and treatment in the dying away of the successive spray-clouds at the end of the long path of stone. There are several studies of sea by Mr. Lee this year which seem to me to mark quite a new energy in his mind: all of them are earnest, and entirely separated from the usual types of conventional gale and wave. This is the best, but

* Note the hint for bringing more of nature into our common work, in the admirable modelling of the polar bear and lion, though merely children's toys.

318 is another good example. Its rock foreground is evidently painted from nature, and is very fine in form; though there are awkward flaws here and there, the consequence seemingly of prolonged habits, hardly broken off, of working without reference to fact. For instance, in the calm pool of water on the left, the stones on the left side have reflections, but those on the right side, none.

230. Master Isaac Newton in his Garden at Woolsthorpe, in the Autumn of 1665. (R. Hannah.)

One of the somewhat incipient pictures of the rising school, but of considerable merit. The Nemesis of Pre-Raphaelitism is its way of fixing on precisely the ugliest things it can find to paint. I don't believe there is such another uninteresting tree-trunk within a circle of ten miles round London, as the one in the centre of this, Sir Isaac's garden. The execution is also hard, though careful: one of the most successful bits is the head of Diamond; not content with "amusing himself with a book," but having also half a mind to the apple; and proposing speedily to interfere with, if not prevent altogether, the discovery of the solar system.

262. The Village Postman. (J. M. Carrick.)

If the reader glances along the various pictures hung near the floor, in any of the rooms, he will find that nearly every other one consists of an attentive study; there is, indeed, so much care taken with so many minor works, that it becomes impossible to distinguish all as they deserve; and I may, perhaps,

have missed some that contain more than study—real achievement. But I can only name this one, as a leading specimen, out of a large number not by any means perfect, but presenting many interesting natural scenes and thoughts, and highly conscientious in execution. There has been immense labour in this picture, and it is very genuine throughout: the old stone-slatted roof and ivy are first-rate, and the figures of the child and its grandfather coming out slowly to see if there is indeed a letter, wrought with more than usual fidelity to rustic character.

295. “And the Prayer of Faith shall Save the Sick.” (J. Phillip.)

I never yet saw so much progress made by any painter in one year as Mr. Phillip has made, from his stiff black and red figures and fans of last year, to this very sweet picture: the principal head, with its opalescent earring, is quite beautiful. There are several other works of great character and power by this painter.

300. An Interior. (F. D. Hardy).

An exquisite little piece of interior painting; hurt only by some conventionality in finishing. For instance, how is it possible that, the sunbeams entering only by that one small window, the principal figures should be in full light, or the shadow fall at a steep angle from the knife-handle over the block in the left-hand corner? But, with his powers of execution, a little more faithfulness will make Mr. Hardy a perfect painter in this kind.

311. The Novice. (J. C. Horsley, A.)

There is always a sweet feeling in Mr. Horsley's pictures; this is an old story, but prettily told—the elder nuns watching anxiously and pitifully, and the dove seeking rest in the bosom.

312. Mid-Spring. (J. W. Inchbold.)

Though not a satisfactory picture, this is one of the most curious efforts of the Pre-Raphaelites this year. The place chosen has been a lovely spot, and the execution of the hyacinths and grass is as close and wonderful a piece of work as there is on the room walls. Take a magnifying glass and look at the squirrel and bird on the tree high up on the left, and the two other birds flying in the wood beyond, and give time to the whole, and it will please you. But Mr. Inchbold must choose subjects with more mass of shade in them; this was, in its essential nature, impracticable, the light being all too high for imitation. Hence the apparent hardness of result.

It is quite worth while, some day, to bring a small opera-glass with you into the architectural room, to examine the exquisite painting of withered heather, and rock, in Mr. Inchbold's other picture, 1187.

320. The Glen, Chudleigh, Devon. (W. F. Witherington, R. A.)

Here is another great advance on the picture of last year: hurt a good deal by want of shadow-tone on the figures, and perhaps also by too great richness of subject. This excess of quantity is a grievous temptation to all artists: many of Turner's largest

works were destroyed by it. Everything that is beyond the spectator's power of easy attention, and is yet not so perfectly painted as to call for his fully *excited* attention, hurts a picture instead of helping it.

352. Chatterton. (H. Wallis.)

Faultless and wonderful: a most noble example of the great school. Examine it well inch by inch: it is one of the pictures which intend, and accomplish, the entire placing before your eyes of an actual fact—and that a solemn one. Give it much time. Mr. Wallis has another very wonderful effort, 516, but it is harder and less successful. I suppose the face of Marvell is a portrait, but he does not look to me like a person who would return a bribe.

398. The Scapegoat. (W. H. Hunt.)

This singular picture, though in many respects faultful, and in some wholly a failure, is yet the one, of all in the gallery which should furnish us with most food for thought. First, consider it simply as an indication of the temper and aim of the rising artists of England. Until of late years, young painters have been mostly divided into two groups; one poor, hard-working, and suffering, compelled more or less, for immediate bread, to obey whatever call might be made upon them by patron or publisher; the other, of perhaps more manifest cleverness or power, able in some degree to command the market, and apt to make the pursuit of art somewhat complementary to that of pleasure; so

that a successful artist's studio has not been in general a place where idle and gay people would have found themselves ill at ease, or at a loss for amusement. But here is a young painter, the slave neither of poverty nor pleasure,—emancipated from the garret, despising the green room, and selecting for his studio a place where he is liable certainly to no agreeable forms of interruption. He travels, not merely to fill his portfolio with pretty sketches, but in as determined a temper as ever mediæval pilgrim, to do a certain work in the Holy Land. Arrived there, with the cloud of Eastern War gathered to the north of him, and involving, for most men, according to their adventurous or timid temper, either an interest which would at once have attracted them to its immediate field, or a terror which would have driven them from work in its threatening neighbourhood, he pursues calmly his original purpose; and while the hills of the Crimea were white with tents of war, and the fiercest passions of the nations of Europe burned in high funeral flames over their innumerable dead, one peaceful English tent was pitched beside a shipless sea; and the whole strength of an English heart spent in painting a weary goat, dying upon its salt sand.

And utmost strength of heart it needed. Though the tradition that a bird cannot fly over this sea is an exaggeration, the air in its neighbourhood is stagnant and pestiferous, polluted by the decaying vegetation brought down by the Jordan in its floods; the bones of the beasts of burden that have died by

the “way of the sea,” lie like wrecks upon its edge, bared by the vultures, and bleached by the salt ooze, which, though tideless, rises and falls irregularly, swoln or wasted. Swarms of flies, fed on the carcasses, darken an atmosphere heavy at once with the poison of the marsh, and the fever of the desert; and the Arabs themselves will not encamp for a night amidst the exhalations of the volcanic chasm.

This place of study the young English painter chooses. He encamps a little way above it; sets his easel upon its actual shore; pursues his work with patience through months of solitude; and paints, crag by crag, the purple mountains of Moab, and grain by grain, the pale ashes of Gomorrah.

And I think his object was one worthy of such an effort. Of all the scenes in the Holy Land, there are none whose present aspect tends so distinctly to confirm the statements of Scripture, as this condemned shore. It is therefore exactly the scene of which it might seem most desirable to give a perfect idea to those who cannot see it for themselves; it is that also which fewest travellers are able to see; and which, I suppose, no one but Mr. Hunt himself would ever have dreamed of making the subject of a close pictorial study. The work was therefore worth his effort, and he has connected it in a simple, but most touching way, with other subjects of reflection, by the figure of the animal upon its shore. This is, indeed, one of the instances in which the subject of a picture is wholly incapable of explaining itself; but, as we are too apt—somewhat too hastily—to accept at once a

subject as intelligible and rightly painted, if we happen to know enough of the story to interest us in it, so we are apt, somewhat unkindly, to refuse a painter the little patience of inquiry or remembrance, which, once granted, would enable him to interest us all the more deeply, because the thoughts suggested were not entirely familiar. It is necessary, in this present instance, only to remember that the view taken by the Jews of the appointed sending forth of the scapegoat into the Wilderness was that it represented the carrying away of their sin into a place uninhabited and forgotten; and that the animal on whose head the sin was laid, became accursed; so that "though not commanded by the law, they used to maltreat the goat Azazel;—to spit upon him, and to pluck off his hair."* The goat, thus tormented, and with a scarlet fillet bound about its brow, was driven by the multitude wildly out of the camp: and pursued into the Wilderness. The painter supposes it to have fled towards the Dead Sea, and to be just about to fall exhausted at sunset—its hoofs entangled in the crust of salt upon the shore. The opposite mountains, seen in the fading light, are that chain of Abarim on which Moses died.

Now, we cannot, I think, esteem too highly, or receive too gratefully, the temper and the toil which have produced this picture for us. Consider for a little while the feelings involved in its conception, and the self-denial and resolve needed for its execution; and

* Sermon preached at Lothbury, by the Rev. H. Melvill. (*Pulpit*, Thursday, March 27th 1856).

compare them with the modes of thought in which our former painters used to furnish us annually with their "Cattle pieces," or "Lake scenes," and I think we shall see cause to hold this picture as one more truly honourable to us, and more deep and sure in its promise of future greatness in our schools of painting, than all the works of "high art" that since the foundation of the Academy have ever taxed the wonder, or weariness, of the English public. But, at the same time, this picture indicates a danger to our students of a kind hitherto unknown in any school; the danger of a too great intensity of feeling, making them forget the requirements of painting as an *art*. This picture, regarded merely as a landscape, or as a composition, is a total failure. The mind of the painter has been so excited by the circumstances of the scene, that, like a youth expressing his earnest feeling by feeble verse (which seems to him good, because he *means* so much by it), Mr. Hunt has been blinded by his intense sentiment to the real weakness of the pictorial expression; and in his earnest desire to paint the Scapegoat, has forgotten to ask himself first, whether he could paint a goat at all.

I am not surprised that he should fail in painting the distant mountains; for the forms of large distant landscape are a quite new study to the Pre-Raphaelites, and they cannot be expected to conquer them at first: but it is a great disappointment to me to observe, even in the painting of the goat itself, and of the fillet on its brow, a nearly total want of all that effective manipulation which Mr. Hunt displayed in

his earlier pictures. I do not say that there is absolute want of skill—there may be difficulties encountered which I do not perceive—but the difficulties, whatever they may have been, are not conquered: this may be very faithful and very wonderful painting—but it is not *good* painting; and much as I esteem feeling and thought in all works of art, still I repeat, again and again, a painter's business is first to *paint*. No one could sympathize more than I with the general feeling displayed in the "Light of the World;" but unless it had been accompanied with perfectly good nettle-painting, and ivy painting, and jewel painting, I should never have praised it; and though I acknowledge the good purpose of this picture, yet, inasmuch as there is no good hair-painting, nor hoof-painting in it,* I hold it to be good only as an omen, not as an achievement; and I have hardly ever seen a composition, left apparently almost to chance, come

* I believe, however, the painter was under worse difficulty in painting this goat than even with his sheep picture, it being, of course, impossible to get the animal to stand still for a moment in an attitude indicating utter weariness. Observe also, that though heavily painted, yet being done every whit from nature, the picture lights the room, far away, just as Turner's used to do (and compare the notes on Nos. 873 and 1002). Only Turner never makes a reflection in water brighter than the sky above it, which, unless the crystals of salt whiten the surface even of this glowing water, seems to be the case here. I suppose the water was painted at one season of the year and the sky at another—both from nature, but, in result, discordant, and afterwards unalterable, as the complex hues of those far-followed reflections do not admit of "toning down," but by separately re-painting every one. Observe, finally, the picture should, if possible, be seen on a dark day, or in twilight, when its fullest effect is developed.

so unluckily: the insertion of the animal in the exact centre of the canvass, making it look as if it were painted for a sign. I can only, therefore, in thanking Mr. Hunt heartily for his work, pray him, for practice sake, now to paint a few pictures with less feeling in them; and more handling.

413. Subject and painter not yet named in the Catalogue. The former, not very intelligible; the latter is reported to be a younger member of the new school—Mr. Burton. His work is masterly, at all events, and he seems capable of the greatest things.

448. Autumn Leaves. (J. E. Millais, A.)

By much the most poetical work the painter has yet conceived; and also, as far as I know, the first instance existing of a perfectly painted twilight. It is as easy, as it is common, to give obscurity to twilight, but to give the glow within its darkness is another matter; and though Giorgione might have come near the glow, he never gave the valley mist. Note also the subtle difference between the purple of the long nearer range of hills, and the blue of the distant neak emerging beyond.

515. View on the Banks of the Thames at Maidenhead. (J. D. Harding.)

A very beautiful and well composed Harding: but *not* a view on the Thames at Maidenhead. The hills in this picture vary from 1,500 to 2,000 feet in height. The clouds are admirably arranged: it is

the best composed sky, after Lewis's, that I see in the rooms. But, considering Mr. Harding's well-known skill in trees, I am vexed, partly with myself and partly with him, because, after long consideration, I am totally unable to form a guess as to the species of tree meant in the group to the left.

532. The Prosperous Days of Job. (W. T. C. Dobson.)

One of the earnest readings of Scripture, which are the truest pride of modern art. How often has Job been painted with the look of a haggard, aged, and despairing mendicant—how seldom, in this first era of his life, the refined oriental lord; leading a life of mercy, and judgment, and truth. The despair indicated in the writhe of the lips and pressure of the knit hands on the head, in the fallen figure, is thoroughly grand; and the watching female figure above is very tender and lovely. All Mr. Dobson's works are good (though this is the best), as far as feeling is concerned; but their colour, or rather want of colour, is deeply to be regretted. Does Mr. Dobson really see Nature as always white and buff—or does he think Buff a specially sacred colour? In *my* mind, it is associated chiefly with troopers' jerkins.

542. Market Day. (G. B. O'Neill.)

Of the old school, but very delicately painted. There is far too much in it to be natural. It is a map of a market day, instead of a picture of one.

578. April Love. (A. Hughes.)

Exquisite in every way : lovely in colour, most subtle in the quivering expression of the lips, and sweetness of the tender face, shaken, like a leaf by winds upon its dew, and hesitating back into peace.

A second very disgraceful piece of bad placing—the thrusting this picture thus aside!

583. Chioggian Fishing Vessels, &c., running into the Lagune of Venice, on the approach of a borasco or violent squall, on the Adriatic. (E. W. Cooke, A.)

Another instance of the extraordinary good fortune which characterizes the exhibition of this year, in possessing the happiest efforts of almost every master. Do any of us recollect so impressive a study of shipping as this by Mr. Cooke, much as he has hunted such quarries across the foam? It is admirably true to the Venetian boat—and the Venetian boat and all the ways of it are beautiful.

592. Highland Mary. (T. Faed.)

Mr. Faed's best work this year; very lovely in its kind; and the distance, though conventional, well composed. Mr. Faed's time for repentance does not seem yet to have come—he will paint grandly, I think, when it does. His other picture is a mere echo of the popular one of last year.

615. Mary Magdalene at the Sepulchre. (H. Le Jeune.)

Another earnest and most touching reading of

Scripture. I never saw that gaze of Mary into the sepulchre—just before she “turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing”—given so faithfully. Much fault might be found with the mere painting; but I will find none! for the main and moving facts are there. Give the picture time, and it will bring tears.

1190. The Eve of St. Agnes. (A. Hughes.)

A noble picture, apparently too hastily finished, and very wrongly put into this room. It looks too blue; but remember it is entirely a night piece, admitting moonlight into the chambers; and if a piece of real moonlight were seen, instead of the picture, through the walls of the room, it would look just as strangely blue: the fault which the eye catches is chiefly that the blue glass casts a white light, and the colours in the left hand subject are confused in relation. The ivy on the tree trunk has clearly been done without a natural model, and is not creditable to the painter of the ivy in No. 578. The half entranced, half startled, face of the awaking Madeline is exquisite; but the lover's in both the centre and right-hand subjects, very far from satisfactory. If, however, the reader knows the poem, he will be grateful for the picture; and there is promise in it of high excellence.

873, 885, 1002 are three intensely faithful studies in the East, by Holman Hunt. The gleam of the Dead Sea in the distance of 873 is quite marvellous, and the drawing of the Sphinx is an invaluable

record. Probably the reader who has never studied natural facts will think the colouring extraordinary, as Turner's used to be thought. It is, nevertheless, precisely true—touch for touch. I have given the reasons of its apparent want of truth in *Modern Painters*, vol. iv., chap. 3, ss. 8, *et seq.*

I must here close my "Notes" on the present exhibition, though I know that I have missed count of many good pictures ; but I am somewhat tired with previous work, and cannot meet the large range of excellence in the Academy this year with correlative exertion. One or two works, also, I have to note in other exhibitions.

SOCIETY OF PAINTERS IN WATER COLOURS.

THE pictures in this pleasant room are so easily distinguishable and accessible, that I think it will be better to refer to them in the order of their importance (or that which seems to me such), than in the regular succession of the catalogue.

1. No. 134.

If this picture is painted in firm colours, and will stand against time ; and if it gets into good hands, and is safely kept, it will one day be among things which men will come to England from far away to see, and will go back to their homes saying, "I have seen it," as people come back now from Venice, saying they have seen Titian's "Peter Martyr;" or from Milan, saying they have seen the "Sposalizio." I have no hesitation in ranking it among the most *wonderful* pictures in the world ; nor do I believe that, since the death of Paul Veronese, anything has been painted comparable to it in its own way.

I rank it with Veronese's work, because it is painted on the same principles of colour and design ; and shows just as much ease of hand, though the execution is modified by the smallness of scale, and by

the resolution to obtain certain effects of light which the Venetian would not have cared for: but if this picture were magnified so as to show the figures the size of life, it would be felt at once that no work but Veronese's could stand against it for a moment; and I only regret that its admirableness of detail should be concentrated so as to become, to most people, all but invisible. If the reader will take a magnifying glass to it, and examine it touch by touch, he will find that, literally, any four square inches of it contain as much as an ordinary water-colour drawing; nay, he will, perhaps, become aware of refinements in its handling which escape the naked eye altogether. Let him examine, for instance, with a good lens, the eyes of the camels, and he will find there is as much painting beneath their drooping fringes as would, with most painters, be thought enough for the whole head: or let him look at the cane-work of the back of the chair on the right, and he will find as many touches in one of its meshes as, according to the notion of water-colour painting ordinarily, would suffice for the tracery of a Gothic window.

Yet, marvellous as this quantity of detail is, the quantity is not the chief wonder, but the *breadth*. It is amazing that there should be so much, but far more amazing that this Much should all be Right. Labour and delicacy we may find, unwearied and unsurpassable, in missal painting, and in old Flemish work of the Van Eyck school. But labour thus concentrated in large purpose—detail thus united into effective mass—has not been seen until now. All

minute work has been, more or less, broken work ; and the most precious pictures were divisible by segments. But here, gradations which are wrought out through a thousand threads or meshes, are as broad and calm in unity as if struck with a single sweep of the hand. Look at the way the pale circle of the tent is gradated, through its woven pattern, with the effect of transparent light beneath. I have never seen anything quite comparable to it reached by art.*

Let us, however, recovering as best we may from our amazement at this toil, and this success, look for a little while at the meaning of the picture—meaning which we find indicated by the painter in the most subtle way. The hand of the principal figure droops negligently at its side, yet so as to point to an unfolded map. The letters on this map are of course reversed, as it lies open rightly for its owner, therefore upside down to the spectator ; but the title of it is carefully made legible—

“ MAP OF ”
 “ S Y R I A , ”
 “ ANCIENT AND MODERN.”

and the picture itself is a map of antiquity and modernism in the East ; the Englishman encamped under Mount Sinai.

* Merely as a piece of technical composition, note the way in which this canopy is repeated and balanced by the matting below ; hide the matting with the hand, and see how topheavy the canopy becomes. The dead fawn, in like manner, repeats and relieves the colour-mass of the principal standing camel.

The reader must pardon me a momentary allusion to work of my own ; for it has not been without some toil that I, also, have been lately endeavouring to trace the kind of contrast which exists between the ancient and modern temper of the human race. Mr. Lewis was wholly ignorant of my work, and I of his. In closing an inquiry into the modern feeling respecting scenery consecrated by solemn associations, I said,—

“I do not know if there be game on Sinai, but I am always expecting to hear of some one shooting over it.”

Some of those semi-serious people who never know earnest from jest, accused me of levity in saying this. I said it not in levity, but in stern soberness ; yet certainly it was with strange surprise that I saw that this great painter had given his year's labour to develope a similar thought, and that, four months only after the sentence was written, the most notable picture on the exhibition walls of London was an accurate fulfilment of its words :—Mount Sinai, with a foreground of dead game.

Special examination of the points of various interest in this picture is, of course, impossible—it would need a separate essay. I shall only note one or two things which, under any circumstances, the reader should not miss.

Note first the labour in the sky. The whole field of it is wrought gradually out with touches no larger than the filaments of a feather. It is, in fact, an embroidered sky—Penelope's web was slight work

compared to it ;—such a thing, as far as I know, never painter endured to do before. The purpose of this is to get the peculiar look of heat haze, and depth of colour, with light, which there is in all skies of warm climates. It cannot be got otherwise : but, inasmuch as whatever work may be given to it, it cannot, in some respects, be got at all, the *light* of it being unapproachable, it almost grieves me to see the labour spent to obtain only an approximate result. Still in this one picture, I feel that it ought to have been done, in order that all might be as well as it could be.

Secondly, Examine the rock drawing of the Sinai, exquisite alike in hue and form, and conquering, stone by stone, the difficulty which, to all landscape painters but Turner, has been hitherto unconquerable, of expressing fallen masses of debris in their endless complexity.

If I venture to speak of a fault in this part of the work, it is only as acknowledging that human strength must always fail somewhere : Veronese is sometimes too flat—Tintoret sometimes too dark—Leonardo sometimes too hard—Turner sometimes too mysterious—Lewis sometimes too definite. Throughout this picture we may trace, here and there, a slightly *linear* violence ; as, for instance, in the black outline round the lower part of the dead fawn in the foreground, which is not entirely true, and gives the work, here and there, a slight aspect of meagreness. The lines of fissure and shadow on the rocks, and round the stones of the distant Sinai, are thus a little too sharp

and thin ; indicating some remains of the painter's old manner of using the pencil point, as in his sketches in Spain.

The faces, however, as well as the draperies, are entirely free from this fault, and the intensity of character reached in them surpasses, I think, all the painter's former efforts. Even the more distant figures are full of portrait character of the most perfect finish. It may be useful to any reader who is himself fond of drawing, to note the subtlety of *truth* on which all depends. Take, for instance, the head of the Arab between the Sheikh and the camel, and note the dim sparkle of light in one eye, missed in the other. A common painter would have put it into both ; but he would have spoiled the head, for it could not have been in both. The point of light in the right one is the reflection, on the under part of the ball, of the light from the nose, which could, of course, be seen on the sunlighted side only. The Arab, whose face is half seen behind the tassel of the housings of one of the camels, which takes the place of his beard, is another thoroughly grand piece of character. There seems much difference of opinion as to the type of head adopted for the figure of the Englishman. I think it very right ;—quiet, delicate, firm, and Cœur-de-Lion-like. The two dogs, like all Lewis's animals, are inimitable.

I have nearly exhausted terms of praise, and have none left, now, strong enough for the complexity and skill of the *composition*. The deliciousness of some of the bits of grey and pale flickering colour, and the

way the innumerable lines and hues flow together, without flaw or a fallacy anywhere, complete the strange merits and marvels of this work. I trust, whatever its destination, that measures may be taken to preserve it from excess of light, and from damp. Body-colour preserved (as in manuscripts) in shade, and kept dry, has stood unchanged for six hundred years; but the slightest adverse influences are to be dreaded for a work of this delicacy, when so much depends upon so little, and when every gleam of colour is precious.

It will be observed that on each side of this brilliant and delicate picture is hung a drawing of excessive darkness and boldness, by David Cox. This was thoroughly well judged—there is no rivalry—but a kindly and effective contrast. The two drawings of English moors (128, 140), gain in gloom and power by the opposition to the Arabian sunlight; and Lewis's finish is well set off by the impatient breadth of Cox. No. 140 is a very interesting example of this master: so also the smaller ones, 234, 240.

83. Her Majesty the Queen inspecting the Wounded Coldstream Guards in the Hall of Buckingham Palace.

A very interesting and successful drawing, apparently full of good portraiture, and certainly of right expression. It is notable for its frank and firm execution; in general, artists are appalled by the presence of Majesty, and in their earnest desire to

do well, are apt to lose their power, and make their work too soft or too polished ; but Mr. Gilbert has retained his presence of mind, and has given an effective rendering of a touching and memorable scene.

23. Huntsman's Boy and Bloodhounds.

This is the best drawing Mr. Taylor has produced for some time, but best only inasmuch as it deals with a subject familiar both to him and to us, on a somewhat larger scale than usual. Indeed, as long as Mr. Taylor persists in his faith that natural form and colour are only to be represented by an ingenious imposition of slops or blots, it is quite useless to criticise his work. Beyond a certain point he cannot, by any physical possibility, advance : that point he had reached fifteen years ago, and it is not a high one.

256, 271. "An Itinerant." "Devotion."

Two superb drawings by Mr. Hunt—fortunate in the features and expression of the models chosen, and, like all the master's work, consummate in execution. As a piece of artistical handling and dexterity, the woolly hair of the negro is a lesson which cannot be too long studied.

The other drawings by this master, in the room, are, of course, all good ; but, perhaps, less *delightful* than usual. I miss his hawthorn blossom, mossy banks, and birds : there are two or three pounds of grapes—those in 285 particularly good ;—but, when

not on the vine, grapes are precisely the dullest fruit that can be painted; and I can only advise, or beg, any reader who is inclined to attend to me, never in future to buy any of Hunt's grapes. He wastes an inconceivable quantity of time on them, and this is the fault of the public, for the grapes always sell.

1, 4. Studies of Lake Scenery (Mr. William Turner). The works of this painter are always tender in feeling, but the larger of these is a strained and mistaken effort; the second is very true and right.

22, 167. Two very interesting studies of Sea. (Mr. Jackson.) The breaking of the low waves in 167 is as true as can be; and both pictures are delicate and earnest in perception of phenomena of sea and sky. The *land* is bad, in both.

20. Another study of the same class (Mr. Naftel); not so good in execution, but well meant. It looks as if painted on the spot, and the cirri in the sky are very true; there is a pleasant sense of the evening wind whistling among the stones as the sun touches their edges with its last gleam. The handling is, however, flat and coarse; each of these stones ought to have had nearly as much work on it as there is in the whole picture. 52 is also an earnest effort, though very faulty in the work on the water. Mr. Naftel will find, on testing his work accurately, that he has cast the shadows inconsistently on the castle, and they destroy the effect of its light.

68. A quiet and unaffected study (Mr. Duncan), remarkable for the absence of all meretricious character. I love colour as well as most people, but confess that a little less cobalt and vermilion would better most of the pictures on the walls of this room.

90. "View in Glencoe." (Mr. Rosenberg.) This is one of the truest pieces of mountain study in the room—evidently wholly from nature, and though feeble in execution, satisfactory in general effect. But Mr. Rosenberg may depend upon it, mountains are quite as delicate as fruit, and he must take not less pains with them.

112, 165. Studies from Nature. (Mr. Fripp, and Mr. Glennie.) Very good in their way; yet rather things to be kept in the artists' folios, for their own use, than to be exhibited.

168. Sunrise on the Jungfrau. (Mr. Collingwood.) Striking in effect; and an attractive picture, but sadly wanting in accuracy of detail. If the artist would draw the mountain carefully, and then work out this same effect, with rock substance beneath it, he might produce a valuable drawing. And the effect itself, simple as it is, would have been twice as good if the artist had not indulged himself with a bright yellow light on his cow, and spots of pure white and yellow about the roots of his pines, while the first rays of dawn are still a mile or two above them, and cannot get down to them for an hour and a half yet, at

the very least. The picture, as it is, cannot be considered a study from nature ; and it forms a connecting link between the works above noticed, in which the artist's *intention*, at least, is to be true, and those forming the larger portion of the exhibition, in which the intention is to be pretty, or clever. These, though there is much dexterity in some of them, need not separately be noticed, as they involve little of interest, except variations in touch, or expedients for getting opposition in blue and orange, yellow and purple, according to the formulæ of colour-science. On the whole, the exhibition is greatly above the average ; and the public seem to have discerned this, for the little bits of blue which the artists like to see completing their harmonies of colour, are now wanting to very few of the pictures. I am heartily glad to see this ; for of all modes of spending money in self indulgence, none are perhaps so collaterally kind, as the encouragement of an art so healthy and pleasurable as Water-colour Painting.

I have no space left for detailed notice of the other exhibitions, but cannot pass unnamed the very remarkable picture in the rooms of the Society of British Artists, No. 110, "Eavesdroppers," by J. Campbell, one of the most earnest pieces of domestic homely truth I have ever seen : nor, in the French Exhibition in Pall Mall, the series of cottage studies, by Edouard Frere, 150 to 155, quite unequalled, it seems to me,

in sincerity and truth of conception, though somewhat dimly painted. (Compare note on pictures in Academy, No. 160.) I ought, perhaps, to have said, truth of *sight*, rather than truth of conception; for I have been informed that this artist, rambling from cottage to cottage, and telling the peasantry "never to mind him," watches and seizes some real moment of action in the undisturbed family; recording, also, with historical fidelity, the position of every article of domestic furniture, and with such scrupulousness, that being on one occasion requested to enrich a somewhat blank piece of background by the addition of some piece of delf or pewter which had caught the purchaser's eye in another study, "No," he replied, "I cannot do that: it was in another cottage."

I consider these pictures, therefore, as examples of true Historical Painting, and of very high value. It is quite impossible to say what importance may, in some future day, attach to such records of the French peasant life of the 19th century.

POSTSCRIPT.

GENERALLY speaking, the arrangement of the pictures in the Academy this year is better than usual : but the errors which are usually notable in various parts of the rooms seem to have been all concentrated in the one crying error of putting No. 122 nearly out of sight. I have a special dislike to pictures of a slate-grey colour, as well as of girls in dresses of pages ; for which cause, in glancing round the room, I passed this “Burd Helen” by, as one of the quaint efforts of some younger member of the rising school, neither deserving praise, nor warranting discouragement. Further examination of it leads me to class it as the second picture of the year ; its aim being higher, and its reserved strength greater than those of any other work except the “Autumn Leaves.” Its whiteness of colour results from the endeavour to give the cold grey of the northern fall of day when the wind is bleak, and the clouds gathering for storm ; their distant cumuli, heavy with rain, hanging on the rises of the moorland. I cannot see, at the distance of the picture from the eye, how far the painting of the pebbles and heath has been carried ; but I see just enough of the figures to make me sure that the work is

thoughtful and intense in the highest degree. The pressure of the girl's hand on her side ; her wild, firm, desolate look at the stream—she not raising her eyes as she makes her appeal, for fear of the greater mercilessness in the human look than in the glaze of the gliding water—the just choice of the type of the rider's cruel face, and of the scene itself—so terrible in haggardness of rattling stones and ragged heath—are all marks of the action of the very grandest imaginative power, shortened only of hold upon our feelings because dealing with a subject too fearful to be for a moment believed true. There are one or two minor faults in it—a horse nearly always stoops its head as it approaches the edge of a ford, and the erectness of its bearing in the picture takes away the look of truth in the entire incident, more than one could have supposed possible. I have some doubt also, whether, unless the spectator were himself supposed to be wading the ford, so as to bring the eye almost on a level with the water surface, the reflection of the sky could so entirely prevent the appearance of the pebbles through the water. They are rightly shown through the dark reflection at the horse's foot ; and rightly effaced, in a great degree, by that of the sky ; but I think they should not have been entirely so. These are, however, quite minor defects, and I merely name them lest they should be brought forward by adverse critics as if they were serious ones.

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